

Appl. No. 09/917,961
Reply to Final Office Action Dated 4/12/2006

REMARKS

With the foregoing amendment claims 1-2, 4-5, 7-9, 16-20, 22, 24-25 and 31-32 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 16, 31 and 32 are independent. No new matter has been added by the amendments. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application.

Examiner Interview and the Rejection of Claims Based on Bacs (US 5,678,089)

Applicant's representatives, Brian Rosenbloom and John Curry, thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the in-person interview held on June 14, 2006. During the interview, we discussed the interpretation of the term "exposure pattern." No agreement was reached.

However, Examiner Chen indicated that one way to move this application forward would be to amend the relevant claims to further define the term "exposure pattern." Examiner Chen indicated that we could distinguish over the Bacs patent (US-5,678,089) by amending the claim to require that, when the camera captures a single image in response to a user pressing the shutter button, the camera exposes different groups of image sensor pixels for different periods of time (e.g., one group of pixels are exposed for 0.5 seconds, and a different group of pixels are exposed for 1.1 seconds).

In accordance with Examiner Chen's suggestion, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 16. More specifically, both claims 1 and 16, as amended, now require

a processor configured to: (a) obtain a light level measurement, [and] (b) automatically generate an exposure pattern based on the light level measurement, wherein the exposure pattern defines a first plurality of shutter elements and a second plurality of shutter elements and defines a first exposure time period for the first plurality of shutter elements and defines a second exposure time period for the second plurality of shutter elements, wherein the first exposure time period is greater than the second exposure time period.

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Applicant respectfully submits that Bacs does not disclose this feature. Applicant, therefore, submits that claims 1 and 16 (and the claims that depend therefrom) are not anticipated by Bacs.

New claims 31 and 32

With respect to new claim 31, new claim 31 is similar to claims 1 and 16 in that new claim 31 requires, "obtaining a light level measurement; [and] automatically generating an exposure pattern based, at least in part, on the light level measurement, wherein the exposure pattern defines a first plurality of shutter elements and a second plurality of shutter elements and defines a first exposure time period for the first plurality of shutter elements and defines a second exposure time period for the second plurality of shutter elements, wherein the first exposure time period is greater than the second exposure time period."

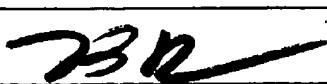
With respect to new claim 32, new claim 32 requires "obtaining a light level measurement; [and] automatically generating an exposure pattern based, at least in part, on the light level measurement, wherein the exposure pattern defines a first plurality of shutter elements and a second plurality of shutter elements and defines a first exposure opacity level for the first plurality of shutter elements and defines a second exposure opacity level for the second plurality of shutter elements, wherein the first exposure opacity level is greater than the second exposure opacity level." This feature is not taught or suggested by any of the art of record.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections, and that they be withdrawn. Applicant believes that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

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If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,					
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